

EFFUSIONS OF THE HEART:

OR,

HEAVENLY MEDITATIONS

AND

DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

A Copy of this Piece was
ordered to be sent to Her
Majesty by the Bookseller
when published handsomely
bound; but the Author never
knew whether her Order was
complied with or not. Hence
that Liberty is now taken -
which the Editor hopes Her
Majesty will pardon.



EFFUSIONS OF THE HEART:

OR,

HEAVENLY MEDITATIONS

AND

DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

BY SOPHRONIA.

I WILL SPEAK OF EXCELLENT THINGS.

PROVERBS viii. 61

L O N D O N :

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M DCC LXXXIX.

EFFECTS OF THE HEART

HEAVENLY MEDITATIONS

DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES



THE LIBRARY OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

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TO THE

Q U E E N ' S

MOST EXCELLENT

M A J E S T Y.

M A D A M,

TH E only Apology that
can possibly be offered for
the Presumption of Dedicat-
ing this little Book to your
MAJESTY, is the Importance
of the Subjects it contains:
And the only Excuse I can
make,

vi DEDICATION.

make, Madam, for so great a Liberty, is, that, as Defender of the Faith, Your MAJESTY's Name might give Sanction to the feeble Efforts of a Female Pen, in recommending to Mankind the great Truths contained in, and taught by, the Sacred Writings.

I take Encouragement to hope, Madam, from the late Public Testimony You have, with our Gracious Sovereign, given to the Kingdom, of Your Zeal for, and Trust in, the LORD

DEDICATION. vii

of Hosts, that my little Offering will not be disdained.

I am, Madam, with constant
and ardent Prayer for Your
MAJESTY'S Furtherance in the
Hope of the Gospel,

Your MAJESTY'S

Dutiful and Obedient

Servant and Subject,

SOPHRONIA.

DEDICATION

of Heart that my little One

ing will not be diminished.

I am, Madam, with constant

and ardent Prayer for Your

Majesty's Fortitude in the

Hope of the Gospel.

Your Majesty's

Dutiful and Obedient

and Servant and Subject,

JOHN TO THE HONORABLE

and all of them, and all

P R E F A C E.

A Series of afflictive providences has induced the writer, for many years past, diligently to search the Records of Truth; that she might be well informed of the privileges of believing, and find strong consolation in the hope of a future, and more permanent state of happiness. The last two years of her life, a pitiable state of imbecility! has deprived her of the enjoyments

joyments attendant on health; and the preceding winter being wholly confined to the bed of languishment, and under apprehensions of approaching dissolution, she was more immediately led to a firm trust on the promises of God, and to *cast anchor within the veil*. But it has pleased the ALMIGHTY to grant a reprieve for the present from the shades of death. Thankfulness and gratitude for this unexpected favour, has induced her to give a public testimony of His supporting grace, and of the consolation HE gives to those who trust in His mercy! She does not flatter herself that

P R E F A C E.

xi

this little book will be universally received: the Gay, the Thoughtless, and the Vain, care *for none of these things*. The lukewarm Professor has other, and, in *his* estimation, more important engagements; satisfied with the externals of religion, he does not wish to become *righteous overmuch*. But the Afflicted and the Pious, who are constrained to look beyond the grave for their happiness, and to seek from eternity and eternal things, those comforts that, for the present, are denied them, may find scope for their reflections, and useful helps to meditation.

“ Myself

“ Myself and Book, at Thy dear Feet,
“ A kind acceptance begs to meet.
“ PROTECTOR, PATRON, deign to be,
“ For both, O LORD, belong to Thee.
“ If any good therein, it's Thine ;
“ And all that's wrong, I own as mine.
“ Whate'er is right, do Thou receive ;
“ Whate'er is faulty, LORD forgive.
“ Me and my Off'ring please to bless,
“ And water both with much increase.
“ And 'fore the world I'll now declare,
“ How great to me Thy Mercies are.
“ O let Thy life in me increase,
“ And fix me in Thy joy and peace :
“ So shall my soul for ever praise
“ The deep profound of Thy rich Grace !”

EFFUSIONS

EFFUSIONS, &c.

MEDITATION I.

THE GREATNESS OF GOD'S MERCY TO MANKIND,

THE great mercy of God to man,
is evidently set forth in His revealed
Will: wherein it is declared, that *He*
so loved the world as to give His only be-
gotten Son a ransom for it, and com-
mended His love to us, in that while we
were yet sinners Christ died for us!

B

He

He saw the misery which sin had introduced, and was so affected with the dismal sight, that His bowels of compassion sounded, and the immensity of His love yearned towards us; which was the foundation of that stupendous scheme that men behold with astonishment, and *angels desire to look into!*

The Son of GOD, of the same substance and eternity with the FATHER, dwelling in light inaccessible, and *upholding all things by the word of His power*, did not disdain to be confined in the prison of a mortal body, nor to stoop from the heights of Majesty to take upon Him the form of a servant, that He might not only taste, but even drink the dregs of our bitter cup; that so the depths of His misery might exalt us to His glory, who, *was made*
sin

sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him!

The magnitude of His love was not satisfied with assigning this work to any of the heavenly Hierarchy ; nor did He send the most glorious of His angels on this embassy of peace and joy ; but came in person, to finish the work which the Father gave Him to do : and as in our acceptance, so in that delegation, the love of God to mankind, appeared incomprehensibly great ; and never was the Father's tenderness so visible, as when reflected on us in the person of His Son !

But as the motive, so also the manner of His coming was extraordinary ; He descended from the Royal Throne

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of His Majesty, passing by the nature of angels, and *took on him the seed of Abraham*. In the holy mystery we are informed, the CREATOR of the universe was born of a virgin, and the ANTIENT OF DAYS became an helpless infant, subject to all the infirmities of human nature; that His presence might be made manifest to our senses. For, *without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. GOD was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory!*

MEDITA-

MEDITATION II.

THE PROMISES OF GOD.

THAT ye be not slothful, but followers of Them, who, through faith and patience inherit the promises; is the kind and salutary exhortation of one, who was well informed of the great and glorious things therein contained, and also of the unchangeable veracity of the Promise-giver; who Himself has recorded, that God willing more abundantly to shew to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for

GOD to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us !

This pleasant and profitable subject, can cheer the gloom of the dreariest hours, and animate the hope of the most desponding mind : it calls us off our own misery to view and meditate the goodness and mercy of GOD, and can never fail of having the desired effect ; for, let our state be dreadful as the miseries of mortality can make it, here is a remedy ; by a believing view of the promises, we *draw water out of the wells of salvation* ; and by a trust in them, give glory to GOD !

Are we groaning under the weight and burden of our sins ? let us attend to the gracious invitation of our
adorable

adorable Saviour—*Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!* And again, *Look unto me and be saved!* Or, if after a believing view of the preceding consolatory truths, we are again in bondage, and under darkness *through manifold temptations*, we are encouraged to *trust in the name of the LORD. Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save: neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear, for the name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe!* Are we sinking under the view of our corruptions, and bemoaning the depravity of our nature? For our consolation, we are promised that *sin shall not always have the dominion over us, but grace shall have the pre-eminence. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean:*

from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them!

Does the accuser of the brethren condemn us? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of GOD's elect? It is GOD that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again; who also maketh intercession for us!

Does unbelief creep in, and like a covert friend molest our peace, under the

the guise of humility, with insinuations of our unworthiness of the promises? Let us repel her falsehoods, by remembering they are freely given to every son and daughter of Adam, that is desirous of, and made willing to receive them: and their impotence renders them proper objects of divine mercy. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that CHRIST JESUS came into the world to save sinners!*

Does the king of terrors, that mighty potentate, threaten to destroy, and shake his iron scepter with malignant joy, knowing all flesh must pay him homage, and bow beneath his scythe? Behold! the Captain of our salvation came to deliver them, who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage! and by passing through the
gloomy

gloomy passage himself, has disarm'd the tyrant's sting, and promised that all His followers shall *come off more than conquerors* ! O DEATH, *where is thy sting* ? O GRAVE, *where is thy victory* ? *The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to GOD which giveth us the victory, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

Are we sorely shot at by the vigilant adversary of souls ? *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you : but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of CHRIST's sufferings ; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy !*

Do

Do we suffer contempt, on account of our Christian profession, and the singularity of our lives ; *not fashioning ourselves according to the course of this world*, but endeavouring to walk in all holiness of life and conversation, *denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts* ; and thereby testifying we are the disciples of a crucified Saviour, who has commanded his followers to take up the cross, and declared that without self-denial we cannot even become his disciples ? *If ye be reproached for the name of CHRIST, happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory and of GOD resteth upon you. On their part, He is evil spoken of ; but on your part He is glorified !*

Almighty and merciful GOD, the Father of the spirits of all flesh, who hath given unto us exceeding great and precious

precious promises in thy most holy word; to strengthen, support, and comfort us in this state of our pilgrimage and Christian warfare! give us thy Holy Spirit, that when we read thy word, the eyes of our understanding may be opened, that we may know the glorious hope of our calling! Grant us, we beseech thee, a firm dependance on, and faith in all thy gracious promises, that, however tribulatory our present state may be, we may with patience wait, and in comfort hope, to be made meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light! Grant us this grace, most merciful God, for the sake of our adorable Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST; to whom with thyself and HOLY SPIRIT, as unto the TRIUNE GOD, be ascribed eternal praises! Amen.

MEDITA-

MEDITATION III.

AFFLICTIONS.

IT has ever been the distinguishing characteristic of God's people, in every age, that they are an afflicted people. *Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards*; but the children of God have a double portion in this lot; and why? Because it is the way that Infinite Wisdom has ordained to bring them to Himself. We read, that our adorable SAVIOUR, as Mediator, was made perfect through sufferings, and *though He were a SON, yet learned He obedience by the things He suffered.*
And

And the sacred oracles again inform us, that *whom the LORD loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers; then are ye bastards, and not sons!*

Seeing, therefore, that afflictions are the inseparable portion of the saints, it will be profitable to enquire into and search out the reason why Infinite Love and Mercy should thus deal with His chosen: when Himself has declared that *He doth not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men; but, as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear Him!*

If we refer to the prophecy of Isaiah, we shall there see our case delineated: *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart*

heart faint ; from the sole of the foot unto the head, there is no soundness in it : but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores ! And can it be surprizing that so dreadful a disease should need the painful remedies that are appointed ? The skilful surgeon knows that probing the wound to the bottom, is the safest and most certain means of cure ; therefore, though a man of tender feelings, he regards the future welfare of his patient ; and does not spare the pain that he occasions. The experienced physician prescribes nauseous medicines, perhaps to his beloved child, or the partner of his life, seeing it needful to administer the bitter potion ; and by that means, either relieves or restores their health : and the kind Physician of souls has appointed afflictions, as the most effectual means of curing the disorders

disorders which sin has brought on the fallen race. *Before I was afflicted*, says the man after God's own heart, *I went astray*. Let us then not think hardly of them : but “ Vindicate the ways of “ GOD to man !”

We may draw abundant consolation from this reflection, that as Infinite Mercy has prescribed the means of cure ; Infinite Wisdom has chosen the most proper affliction, and the most suitable to our present case ; whether it be in mind, body, or estate : He has also appointed the degree of it, and severe as it may be, it shall mercifully operate for his glory and our future good : and trust for this the pen of one, “ who deals not in the false commerce “ of unfelt truth ;” but has herself drank deeply of the waters of MARAH !

If

If the Almighty, for a season, should permit confusion and disorder to subvert our intellectual faculties, and, by their derangement, leave us more liable to the temptations of Satan, and to the delusions of our bewildered imaginations, He can restore harmony and peace, and so sanctify the affliction, that it may lead us to trust in Him more firmly, and to glorify Him for the great deliverance: Then shall we say, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted.*

Should the same wisdom see it more expedient to cast us on the bed of languishment, and day after day, perhaps week after week, chasten us with pain, that we are continually crying out, *Wearisome days and nights are appointed unto me; my face is foul with weeping,*

C

and

and on my eye-lids is the shadow of death! perhaps we may then learn the most useful lessons of wisdom and piety. Now is the season of reflection and self-examination, which health might not so conveniently afford, or, if our situation offered, it might not be so often embraced as the importance of our eternal interest requires. And it may be that our Heavenly FATHER has appointed this season of affliction to bring us nearer to Himself, and, by this means, prepare us for His more immediate presence: then may we say with the sweet singer of Israel,——

“ But I forbid my sorrows now,

“ Nor dares the flesh complain:

“ Diseases bring their profit too;

“ The joy o’ercomes the pain.

“ Had

" Had but the prison-walls been strong,

" And firm without a flaw,

" In darkness I had dwelt too long,

" And less of GLORY saw."

But GOD's people, in the general, are a poor, as well as an afflicted, people. *Hath not GOD chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love HIM?* This part of the saints portion is well worthy of consideration. We read *That the earth is the LORD's; and the fullness thereof:* how is it, then, that He gives his choicest disciples so scanty a portion of it; and often permits them to struggle with difficulties, and labour hard for their daily bread? The reason is sufficiently obvious, if we take a survey of the general conduct of men. Look at the rich man,

and you see him contented in his possessions, desiring not the knowledge of GOD, or of His ways; altogether careless of the interest of his immortal soul, daily banqueting in the pleasures of sense, and forgetting that for all these things GOD will call him unto judgment; and that he must give an account of the talents committed to his charge, in that *great and notable day of the LORD!* But let us come nearer home, and review the conduct of professing Christians, who are rich in this world's goods, and see if it forwards them in their heavenly warfare: I fear (though there are exceptions) the generality of them will be seen walking after their own imaginations, and not after our SAVIOUR's rule and example! They may contribute great sums to the churches they belong to,

and

and thereby satisfy conscience, that they are promoting the Redeemer's interest in the world, which is undoubtedly laudable and acceptable: but they are commanded to *walk as He also walked* in this world; *denying all ungodliness and worldly lust*, they are exhorted to *visit the sick, the widow and the fatherless in their afflictions*; to administer of their abundance liberally, when occasion offers, and to keep themselves *unspotted from the world*; being *holy in all manner of conversation*! There are but few among the rich professors, who walk according to this rule; and therefore it is, that God in wisdom and mercy frequently denies his people those things that would hinder their spiritual improvement, and retard their progress heavenward. Our adorable SAVIOUR has sanctified

the state of poverty, by submitting to it and choosing it, when He sojourned among men: And *He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, took upon Him the form of a servant; and, Though He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich!* Let us not then repine if our portion be small, and, with a frugal œconomy, we are striving to owe no man any thing. If we have chosen the LORD for our portion, there is in store for us DURABLE RICHES, and a crown of glory, which the LORD the Righteous Judge shall give us at that great day!

H Y M N.

H Y M N.

- “ With joy we meditate the grace
“ Of our High-Priest above ;
“ His heart is made of tenderness,
“ His bowels melt with LOVE.
- “ Touch'd with a sympathy within,
“ He knows our feeble frame ;
“ He knows what fore temptations mean,
“ For He hath felt the same.
- “ He in the days of feeble flesh
“ Pour'd out his cries and tears,
“ And in his measure feels afresh
“ What ev'ry member bears.
- “ Then let our humble faith address
“ His mercy and his power ;
“ We shall obtain deliv'ring grace
“ In the distressing hour.”

H. Y. M. N.

"With joy we meditate the grace

"Of our High-Father above ;

"His heart is made of tenderness,

"His bowels melt with love.

"Touched with a sympathy within,

"He knows our feeble frame ;

"He knows what temptations mean,

"For He has felt the same.

"He in the days of flesh felt

"Pain and his cares and tears,

"And in his measure felt himself

"What every member feels.

"Then let our humble faith adore

"His mercy and his power ;

"We shall obtain delivering grace

"In the distressing hour."

MEDI.

C 4

MEDITATION IV.

H E A V E N.

IT has been the opinion of some, that heaven is rather a STATE than a PLACE ; but that it is both, is clearly proved from the scriptures of truth. *Know ye not that the kingdom of heaven is within you ?* says the great Apostle ; referring to the state of grace in every believing heart, which will terminate in glory. The New Jerusalem, the city of the living God, is majestically described in the Revelations ; where the golden pavement, the pearly gates, the river of the water of life, and the

tree

tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, evidently confirm the locality of it. We may, therefore, from the sacred pages, find ample scope for meditation on this sublime subject.

We will first consider it in a negative view, as a state of privation from all evil; and then in a positive view, as the fruition of all good. We read of the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, who reigneth in the hearts of the children of disobedience, and whose watchful malignancy is ever seeking to tempt and to destroy; but there he has no power; neither have the wicked, for they are for ever excluded the holy city. *Without are dogs and sorcerers, whoremongers and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth*

loveth and maketh a lye ! There, also, is freedom from sin ; men's forest and bitterest enemy, and the fruitful source of all his misery : for there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth.

“ Those holy gates for ever bar pollution, sin, and shame.”

Sickness, sorrow, and sighing have no place here : The inhabitants of that city shall no more say, I am sick ; and the LORD GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces !

“ His own soft hand shall wipe the tears

“ From ev'ry weeping eye ;

“ And pains, and groans, and griefs, and fears,

“ And death itself, shall die !

But as it is not only a privation from all evil, it is also the fruition of all possible good ; which is the most animating part of this our delightful meditation ; and so exuberant with blef-

sings, that we do not, with any propriety, know how to arrange them ; nevertheless, shall presume to make the feeble attempt.

and JEHOVAH, Father, Son, and Spirit, the Incomprehensible and Triune Deity, the Glory of all worlds, has peculiarly manifested Himself in heaven, in the person of CHRIST ; who being *the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express Image of His Person*, here reigns " King of Saints and Angels too !"

The magnificence of this heavenly Jerusalem, *the city of the living God*, is gloriously and beautifully delineated by the Apostle, who was favoured with the vision : he informs us, that the *city was of pure gold, like unto clear glass ; the building of the wall of jasper, and*
the

the foundations garnished with precious stones; the twelve gates were of pearls, every several gate was of one pearl; and the city had no need of the sun neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of GOD did lighten it, and the LAMB is the light thereof! How dazzling is thy prospect, of whom such glorious things are spoken, Thou city of the living GOD! concerning which it is also written, The nations of them which are saved, shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it!

" LORD, how our souls are all on fire

" To see thy bless'd abode;

" Our tongues rejoice in tunes of praise,

" To our triumphant GOD!"

It

It is universally acknowledged that society forms great part of man's happiness on earth, nor will it a little increase his felicity in heaven. We shall then endeavour to inform ourselves respecting the society we may expect to meet with, if it should be our happy ^x lot to be admitted *within the walls of the city*. It has been before observed, that our adorable SAVIOUR is LORD of that world, whose sceptre sways with uncontrollable power: we also read, that there are principalities and powers, thrones and dominions under HIM, for which He has appointed kings and priests: there are also *an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly of the church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; and the spirits of just men made perfect*.

See

See where the LAMB in glory stands,
Incircled with his radiant bands,

And join the angelic pow'rs :
For all that height of glorious bliss
Our everlasting portion is,

And all that heav'n is ours !

Thrice blessed bliss—inspiring hope !
It lifts the fainting spirits up,

It brings to life the dead !
Our conflicts here shall soon be past,
And then we shall ascend at last,
Triumphant with our head !

That great mysterious DEITY
We soon with open face shall see !

The beatific sight
Shall fill the heav'nly courts with praise,
And wide diffuse the golden blaze
Of everlasting light !

MEDITA-

See where the Lamb in glory stands,
Incited with his radiant bands,
And join the angelic powers,
For all the height of glory there,
Our everlasting portion is,
And all that we desire is ours!
Thrice-blessed and triumphant host,
It is the Father's love that
It brings to life the dead,
Our conflicts here shall soon be o'er,
And then we shall stand in his
I triumph with our Lord,
That great mystery is this,
We soon with open face shall see
The brilliant light,
Shall fill the heavenly courts with praise,
And wide diffuse the golden beam
Of everlasting light.

MEDITATION V.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

IF we review the life of the blessed JESUS, we shall find that from His entrance into the world, He was ranked among the sufferers! His birth being predicted by the appearance of a star, we are informed there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, *saying, where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star, and are come to worship him.* Herod alarmed at this intelligence, *was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him:* he privily sought out the wise men and sent them to *Bethlehem* to search out the young
D child,

child, under pretence of paying him homage; but, they being warned of God in a dream, returned home another way. Then Herod when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that prophecy of Jeremiah—*In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.* But it pleased God to defeat his purpose, and to preserve the young child from the murderer's hand, that He might accomplish the grand purposes of His incarnation.

Preceding

Preceding His public ministry, we
 read of his fasting and temptations :
*And when he had fasted forty days and
 forty nights, he was afterwards an hungred;
 and when the tempter came to him, he
 said, If thou be the Son of GOD, com-
 mand that these stones be made bread.
 But he answered and said, It is written,
 man shall not live by bread alone, but by
 every word that proceedeth out of the
 mouth of GOD. Then the devil taketh
 Him up into the holy city; and setteth
 Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and
 saith unto Him, If thou be the Son of
 GOD, cast thyself down; for it is written,
 He shall give His Angels charge con-
 cerning thee, and in their hands they shall
 bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash
 thy foot against a stone. JESUS said unto
 him, It is written again, Thou shalt not
 tempt the LORD thy GOD. But the ad-*

versary, unwilling to relinquish the assault, persisted in the bold attempt. *Again the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them : and saith unto Him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, satan : for it is written, Thou shalt worship the LORD thy GOD, and Him only shalt thou serve. Thus it became Him in all points to be tempted like as we are, For in that He himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted !*

He not only submitted to the temptations of satan for our profit, *But He who was rich, also for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might*
be

be made rich. He took upon Him the form of a servant, and was of no repute among men; the poor and the afflicted were His companions, and so abject was His state of poverty, that He had no certain dwelling: and one enquiring his abode, wishing to be with Him, received this reply; The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head. He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Let us follow Him to the garden of Gethsemane, and there we shall find Him pouring out strong cries and tears for the fallen race: mark His agonizing prayer

in the prospect of what was before Him; *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; (observe the pious resignation) nevertheless not my will, but thine be done. And being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground!* But these sufferings were only preparatory to the great sacrifice He was going to make of Himself.—*In the end of the world hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin unto salvation!*

And when He arose from prayer, and was come to His disciples, He found them sleeping for sorrow, and after expostulating with them, He in-
forms

forms them the hour was at hand when the Son of Man should be betrayed into the hands of sinners, and while He was speaking, *Lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master ! and kissed Him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come ? Then came they and laid hands on Jesus, and took Him. And they that had laid hold on Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.*

We now find Him in the High Priest's palace, before his accusers, and see Him condemned as a blasphemer, for confessing those truths he had publicly taught in their synagogues !

And mark the insults He submitted to—They sacrilegiously spit upon, and defiled that adorable face, which is the joy of angels to behold; that sheds its brightest beams of light, and fills all heaven with transport and triumph! They strike Him with the palms of their hands; and in derision blindfold the LORD of the universe, and make Him the laughing-stock of the insulting rabble; inhumanly buffeting Him, as though He had been the vilest miscreant! When they had wearied themselves with their insults and cruelty, they delivered Him up to the soldiers, sentenced to a most scandalous and painful death. *Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe. And*
when

when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right-hand; and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!—And after that they had mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him, and put His own raiment on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him. But He was wounded for OUR transgressions, He was bruised for OUR iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed!

Let us now behold Him lifted up upon the cross, as an ensign for the people, observe His dying prayer for His cruel murderers, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!*

“ Here’s love and grief beyond degree,

“ The LORD of glory dies for men!”

Is

*Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by?
Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow
like unto my sorrow, which is done unto
me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted
me, in the day of his fierce anger!*

Here let us pause awhile, and enquire the cause of this unparalleled train of sufferings, and we shall find in the efficient cause, that prolific source of all evil. *He suffered for our sins in His own body upon the tree—the Just for the Unjust, that He might thereby bring us to GOD!* But what pen can describe the agonies He endured, when hanging on the accursed tree? Nature sympathised with her GOD; for we read, *It was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth unto the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and behold, the vail of the*

temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom ; and the earth did quake, and the rocks were rent.—And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost !

“ ’TIS FINISH’D, the REDEEMER said,

“ And meekly bow’d his dying head !

“ Whilst we this sentence scan,

“ Come, sinners, and observe the word,

“ Behold the conquests of our LORD,

“ Compleat for helpless man !

“ Finish’d the righteousness of grace,

“ Finish’d for sinners, pard’ning peace ;

“ Their mighty debt is paid :

“ Accusing law, cancel’d by blood,

“ And wrath of an offended GOD,

“ In sweet oblivion laid !”

MEDITA-

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MEDITATION VI.

ON THE LOVE OF GOD.

BEHOLD *what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God !*

To have an experimental knowledge of the love of God is the highest attainment of divine grace ; as it assimilates us into His glorious image : for *God is love ; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* But this invaluable wisdom is not easily to be attained. It will require the utmost diligence and most vigilant pursuit,

suit, to have any competent knowledge of it ; and then we must *wait the moving of the waters* for the enjoyment thereof ; seeing it is no less than union and communion with God. *And truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ !*

The way that leads to it is pointed out in the holy scriptures, *to which, as a sure word of prophecy, we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place ;* lest we be carried astray by the chimeras of imagination. We learn from the Apostle, that our love to God originates in Him. *We love Him because He first loved us.* And He manifested that love unto us, by *sending His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.* *Herein is love ; not that we loved God, but that*
He

He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins ! In proportion as this is received and believed in our hearts, it will awaken its similar principle in us, and will be productive of that assurance the Apostle testifies, And we have known and believed the love that God bath to us.

Under the Old Testament dispensation, we have an eminent example of this grace in the pious king David. *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name ! I will bless the LORD at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the LORD, the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together !* And the cxvith Psalm is an animated

animated profession of his love to God, and thankfulness for His delivering mercy.

The gospel dispensation, wherein He has more clearly manifested His love to man, surely calls for louder "songs of praise." O ye princes and ye nobles! who are such large recipients of His munificence, does not your hearts glow with gratitude, and your tongues resound His praise? Does not your splendid roofs reverberate with sacred anthems of joy and thanksgiving to this bountiful benefactor and almighty friend? Or are your minds so enveloped in clouds of voluptuousness and sensuality, that, seven-fold more dark than they were by nature, they cannot even admit a gleam of light from His all-penetrating

ing rays? If you see no beauty in the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, to captivate your minds, yet be persuaded to follow the worthy example of your earthly Sovereign, and learn *to number your days, that you may apply your hearts unto wisdom. While the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them!*

As to you, my believing brethren, who *have tasted that the LORD is gracious*, even the remembrance of His name, will be as ointment poured forth, and you will join with me in the words of the poet,

- " My life itself, without thy love,
- " No taste of pleasure cou'd afford;
- " 'Twould but a tiresome burden prove,
- " If I were banish'd from the LORD."

H Y M N.

- “ Thou hidden love of God, whose height,
“ Whose depth unfathom'd, no man knows;
“ I see from far thy beauteous light,
“ Inly I sigh for thy repose :
“ My heart is pain'd, nor let it be
“ At rest, till it finds rest in Thee !

“ Is there a thing beneath the sun,
“ That strives with Thee my heart to share,
“ Ah ! tear it thence, and reign alone,
“ The LORD of ev'ry motion there :
“ Then shall my heart from earth be free,
“ When it has found repose in Thee !

“ O love ! thy sov'reign aid impart,
“ To save me from low-thoughted care ;
“ Chace this self-will thro' all my heart,
“ Thro' all its latent mazes there :
“ Make me Thy dutious child, that I,
“ Ceaseless, may Abba, Father, cry !

" Each moment draw from earth away

" My heart, that lowly waits Thy call ;

" Speak to my inmost soul, and say,

" I am thy Love, thy GOD, thy All !

" To feel Thy pow'r, to hear Thy voice,

" To taste Thy Love, be all my choice !"

(3)

Each morning when I wake

My heart is full of joy

And I am full of love

For I am full of love

For I am full of love

For I am full of love

For I am full of love

For I am full of love

For I am full of love

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MEDITATION VII.

DEATH.

THAT it is *appointed for all men once to die*, is an incontrovertible truth, every day's experience confirms it to our minds; and that death makes no distinction of years or of persons is equally true: we see the hoary head descend into the grave, and the infant of a month old, snatched from its mother's breast. The monarch and the beggar are alike the prey of this insatiable archer!

“ Ah! but to die, to bid adieu,

“ An everlasting farewell too!

“ Farewel to every joy around—

“ Oh, the heart sickens at the sound!”

And well it may!—To be cut off from all the enjoyments of LIFE; to be torn from the dear objects of our affections; to be deprived the light of the sun, and confined to the gloomy horrors of the tomb, are reflections of the most dismal and affecting nature! Nor is this all; for after DEATH is JUDGMENT! “How dreadful then to “meet them, unacknowledged, unap-
“proved?” Let us then, for once, permit the awful thought to have due weight on our minds; it will certainly be profitable; but, if now discarded, the time is approaching when it will have its tremendous force!

DEATH!

" DEATH! 'tis a melancholy day
 " To those that have no God ;
 " When the poor soul is forc'd away,
 " To seek her last abode !"

It will be the subject of this meditation to search and find an antidote for these gloomy terrors, and to endeavour so to fortify our minds against this potent adversary ; that when He approaches, authorised to execute His commission, we may view Him not as the *destroying angel*, but the Harbinger of eternal Peace and Joy ! We read, that *life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel*, therefore to this sacred and invaluable repository we apply for our remedy ; let us diligently search its hallowed pages, and cordially and affectionately embrace and ever hold fast its glorious truths ! It has been observed, that sin is the prolific source of

all evil ; and it is sin that has introduced this evil into the world : for we read, *the wages of sin is death ; and, as by one man sin entered into the world, and DEATH by sin ; so DEATH passeth upon all men, for that all have sinned !* But blessed be God, the inevitable decree is not more certain than, that, through His abounding mercy, the sting of death is destroyed by the sacrifice of CHRIST ; *who gave Himself to die for our sins, and is risen again for our justification !—If, says the Apostle, in this life, we only had hope in Christ, we should be of all men the most miserable.—* And in full assurance of the glorious doctrine of the resurrection, he boldly affirms, *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came* DEATH, *by man came also the RESUR-*

RECTION

RECTION of the dead. And as in Adam all die, even so in CHRIST shall all be made alive!

“ Death is no more the King of Dread,

“ Since our IMMANUEL rose;

“ He took the tyrant's sting away,

“ And spoil'd our hellish foes!

Is not an assurance of these comfortable truths, that will cheer the drooping spirit, and revive the fainting soul, worthy of investigation? At that awful period of life, to have the animating hope, *that this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and that this mortal shall put on immortality*; is surely deserving of our diligent researches, and most ardent prayers!—
Then shall be brought to pass that saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory!

O ye

O ye gay, ye vain and thoughtless ones, *who put far from you the evil day*, what rhetoric shall I make use of, to persuade you to be *wise, to consider your latter end*? I will not display the thunders of the law, they ill comport with the tenderness of a female heart: but I call your attention to the melting scenes of pity and of love. Behold! the adorable SAVIOUR'S "banners hung on high!" Contemplate the amazing love, and let your hearts melt within you! Oh! consider, that your sins were the cause of His sufferings; and His love, alone, made Him willing to undergo the painful and ignominious death of the cross!

" Oh! for this love let rocks and hills

" Their lasting silence break:

" And all harmonious human tongues,

" The SAVIOUR'S praises speak!

But

But you, my *professing* brethren, that make your *boast in the LORD*! it well becomes *you* to examine yourselves by the touch-stone of truth; knowing that *all are not Israel that are of Israel*; and that a speculative knowledge of religion may be attained, as well as of any other science; and the attainer destitute of a well grounded hope! Have you experienced the renovating change mentioned in the gospel? Are ye created anew in CHRIST JESUS; honouring Him before men, by *walking as He also walked*? Or are ye content with a name to live, resting in the hope of the hypocrite, taking God's sacred name in your mouths, while your *hearts are far from Him*? How will you face this grisly monster, when the mask must drop, and every false refuge be swept away?

But

But ye humble followers of the LORD, however afflicted, or however distressed, perhaps like your blessed Master, despised and rejected; men *of sorrows and acquainted with griefs!* you may here find strong consolation;—for, says the Apostle, *death is yours; for ye are CHRIST'S; and CHRIST is GOD'S!* Then may you exultingly cry out, *Oh death! where is thy sting? Oh grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to GOD, which giveth us the victory, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST!—“Blessed be GOD for “JESUS CHRIST.”*

THE

THE
DYING CHRISTIAN'S SOLILOQUY,

By Mr. POPE.

VITAL spark of heav'nly flame !
Quit, oh quit, this mortal frame !
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
Oh ! the pain, the bliss of dying !
Cease fond nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life !

Hark ! they whisper ; Angels say,
" Sister spirit come away !"
What is this absorbs me quite,
Steals my senses, shuts my sight ?
Drowns my spirit, draws my breath,
Tell me, my soul, can this be Death ?

The

(62)

The world recedes ; it disappears !

Heav'n opens on my eyes ; my ears

With sounds seraphic ring !

Lend, lend your wings, I mount, I fly !

O Grave ! where is thy victory ?

O Death ! where is thy sting ?

THE END.



